

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent which comprises a polymer containing ~~as an essential component at least one structural unit~~ (i) 15 - 50 mass% of at least one structural unit (I) represented by the formula (1), (ii) 5 - 80 mass% of at least one structural unit (II) selected among a structural unit (II-a) represented by the formula (2) or a structural unit (II-b) represented by the formula (3), (iii) 0 - 15 mass% of at least one structural unit (III) represented by the formula (4), and (iv) 0 - 30 mass% of at least one structural unit (IV),

wherein the structural units (I), (II), (III), and (IV) are present in the polymer to total 100 mass%,

wherein (I) is represented by the following formula (1):

[Chemical 1]

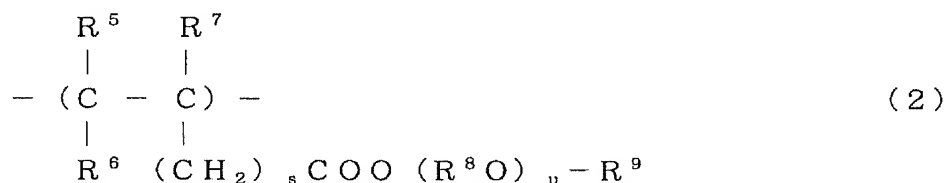


wherein R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, and R<sup>3</sup> independently stand for a hydrogen atom, a methyl group, or a -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>COOX group, wherein X stands for a hydrogen atom, a monovalent metal, a divalent metal, an ammonium group, an organic amine group, or a hydrocarbon

group, and p is an integer of 0 - 2; and R<sup>4</sup> stands for a hydrocarbon group of 4 - 30 carbon atoms,

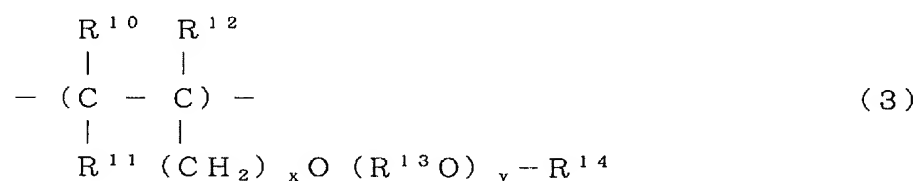
(II) is selected from a structural unit (II-a) or (II-b) represented by the following formulas (2) or (3), respectively:

[Chemical 2]



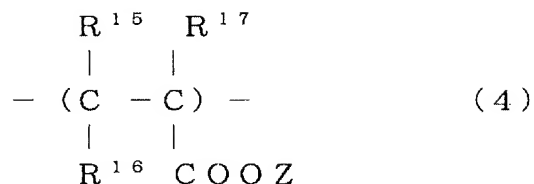
wherein R<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> independently stand for a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; s is an integer of 0 - 2; R<sup>8</sup>O stands for one oxyalkylene group of 2 - 18 carbon atoms or a mixture of two or more such oxyalkylene groups; u stands for an average addition mol number of oxyalkylene group (R<sup>8</sup>O) and is in the range of 1 - 300; and R<sup>9</sup> stands for a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group of 1 - 30 carbon atoms,

[Chemical 3]



wherein R<sup>10</sup>, R<sup>11</sup> and R<sup>12</sup> independently stand for a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; x is an integer of 0 - 2; R<sup>13</sup>O stands for one oxyalkylene group of 2 - 18 carbon atoms or a mixture of two or more such groups; y stands for an average addition mol number of the oxyalkylene group (R<sup>13</sup>O) and is in the range of 1 - 300; and R<sup>14</sup> stands for a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group of 1 - 30 carbon atoms, and

(III) is represented by the following formula (4):

[Chemical 4]


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wherein  $\text{R}^{15}$ ,  $\text{R}^{16}$  and  $\text{R}^{17}$  independently stand for a hydrogen atom, a methyl group, or a  $-(\text{CH}_2)_q\text{COOZ}'$ , wherein  $\text{Z}'$  stands for a hydrogen atom, a monovalent metal, a divalent metal, an ammonium group, or an organic amine group, and  $q$  is an integer of 0 - 2; and  $\text{Z}$  stands for a hydrogen atom, a monovalent metal, a divalent metal, an ammonium group, or an organic amine group, provided that if  $\text{COOZ}'$  and  $\text{COOZ}$  are present in the total number of not less than 2, two of them may form an anhydride, and

exhibiting wherein the drying shrinkage-reducing agent exhibits surface tension in the range of 25 - 50 mN/m in a solution containing 0.2 mass% of the polymer in a cement supernatant.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, which is used in a hydraulic material.

5. (Previously Presented) A shrinkage-reducing composition comprising at least one drying shrinkage-reducing agent set forth in claim 1 and a dispersing agent.

6. (Original) A shrinkage-reducing composition according to claim 5, wherein the mass ratio of the drying shrinkage-reducing agent and the dispersing agent is in the range of 99.5 : 0.5 - 0.5 : 99.5.

7. - 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) A shrinkage-reducing composition comprising at least one drying shrinkage-reducing agent set forth in claim 4 and a dispersing agent.

13. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the drying shrinkage-reducing agent exhibits a surface tension in the range of 25 - 46 mN/m in a solution containing 0.2 mass% of the polymer in a cement supernatant.

14. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the drying shrinkage-reducing agent exhibits a surface tension in the range of 25 - 42 mN/m in a solution containing 0.2 mass% of the polymer in a cement supernatant.

15. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein exhibiting surface tension in the range of 25 - 38 mN/m in a solution containing 0.2 mass% of the polymer in a cement supernatant.

16. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains 0 - 10 mass% of at least one structural unit (III) represented by the formula (4).

17. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains 0 - 5 mass% of at least one structural unit (III) represented by the formula (4).

18. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the structural unit (IV) includes monomers copolymerizable with monomers (I), (II-a) or (II-b), and (III).

19. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the structural unit (IV) includes monomers copolymerizable with monomers (I), (II-a), (II-b), and (III).

20. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 18, wherein the structural unit (IV) includes one or more of the following monomers: half esters and diesters; half amides and diamides; half esters and diesters of alkyl (poly)alkylene glycols; (poly)alkylene glycol di(meth)acrylates; bifunctional

(meth)acrylates; (poly)alkylene glycol dimaleates; unsaturated sulfonic acids, and monovalent metal salts, divalent metal salts, ammonium salts, and organic amine salts thereof; vinyl aromatic compounds; dienes; unsaturated cyanogens; divinyl aromatic compounds; cyanurates; allyls; unsaturated amino compounds; vinyl ethers or allyl ethers; siloxane derivatives; and/or unsaturated phosphates.

21. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 20, wherein the polymer contains 0 - 20 mass% of at least one structural unit (IV).

22. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains structural units (I), (II-a) or (II-b), and (III).

23. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains structural units (I), (II-a), (II-b), and (III).

24. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains structural units (I), (II-a), (II-b), (III), and (IV).

25. (New) A drying shrinkage-reducing agent according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains structural units (I), (II-a) or (II-b), (III), and (IV).